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It is impossible within the limits of a brief review to show in detail the numerous merits of this volume. The narrative is one of precise statements of fact. The events of those crowded days are described with sufficient fullness. Half of the book is devoted to those of February 24. It would be difficult to find a theme offering more resistance to orderly presentation, for the February Revolution was a wild welter of conflicting forces, of multitudinous incidents. The situation changed from hour to hour and almost from moment to moment, with astounding, disconcerting rapidity. Yet M. Crémieux's narrative is surprisingly clear and admirably balanced. It is characterized by a continuous critical control of the sources and of the numerous previous writers on the subject. And where the author is in doubt, where the evidence is lacking or is dubious, he points out that fact and avoids resorting to conjecture, hypothesis, or easy generalization.

This monograph disproves several conceptions concerning the February Revolution which have passed into the historical literature of the last half-century without serious challenge. One of these is that that revolution was a *surprise*, a veritable accident in which chance and the activity of a few men played the preponderant rôle. In the polemics which began on the very morrow of the event between Monarchists and Republicans both parties accepted this description as correct. We find it in the work of Garnier-Pagès, the most elaborate and hitherto the most important republican history of this revolution, and in the royalist writings of Guizot and Thureau-Dangin. It is impossible here to summarize M. Crémieux's proof to the contrary, but it is ample and convincing. The destruction of this legend is a most important service to historical scholarship.

CHARLES DOWNER HAZEN.

*The Life and Times of Cavour.* In two volumes. By WILLIAM ROSCOE THAYER. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1911. Pp. xvi, 604; viii, 562.)

THIS solid biography of the foremost among the makers of modern Italy has been published at an auspicious moment. African expansion, which is the logical outcome of Italian unity and prosperity, has recently been undertaken by Cavour's successors with a thoroughness of organization and a command of national energy which recall the best traditions of Cavourian government, proving the quality and stability of the national structure and justifying the designs of the master-builder. It has been usual among historians of the Italian national struggle to give exaggerated prominence to the purely revolutionary aspects of the conflict. Dramatic Italian victories on the battle-field lay mostly with the volunteer revolutionary corps glorified by the leadership of Garibaldi, and it is natural that both the latter and the thrilling story of a half-century of heroic conspiracy should have appealed more to most historians than the long, prosaic course of legislative reform, sound financ-

ing, educational and industrial development, and army and navy reorganization. Yet these slow processes are what constitute state-building, and Italy is what she is to-day because they were carried out conscientiously along the lines laid down by a great leader, one whose claims to the foremost place among European statesmen of the nineteenth century Mr. Thayer has now done much with the English-reading public to establish. Italy, whose pride in Cavour's achievements has been obscured in some quarters by loud-voiced Garibaldian claims upon national gratitude, will give wider recognition to his genius now that the events in Tripolitania have awakened her to a fuller consciousness of strength as an organized, disciplined, and united state. She has recently decreed a national edition of the letters of Cavour, which will bring to light many unpublished documents, and help to a full appreciation of his work.

Mr. Thayer's biography is the most important life of Cavour that has been published. It makes little pretense at bringing out new material, but the writer understands and has interpreted the character, the ideas, and the policy of Cavour as no historian has done since Luigi Chiala. Cavour's life falls into two distinct periods. The first, that of an obscure private citizen, closes with his thirty-seventh year. Mr. Thayer has made a painstaking and thorough study of all published correspondence and other documentary evidence of this earlier period, and in setting forth the practical philosophy and clever dealings of the agriculturist and capitalist gives a striking picture of the "most practical finance minister of modern times" *in the making* (I. 25). In 1847 Cavour emerged as a progressive journalist and in 1848 entered Parliament; in 1850 he became Minister of Agriculture and Commerce and in 1852 he was called to the premiership. For the last six years of his life, 1856-1861, he was the dominating figure in Italy, and from 1859 to 1861 the master-mind in the international conflicts of Europe.

Mr. Thayer's analysis of parliamentary groups and struggles in Piedmont in the second period shows wide research and full maturity of judgment. His narrative throughout the work is clear and spirited. He has an unerring eye for what is essential, and as a whole the biography is a model in dramatic development. The individual chapters abound in incisive criticism—and it should be added, are well larded with apt bits of philosophy and clever metaphors which incidentally attest the writer's strong anti-protectionist, anti-papal, and anglophobe principles. As Cavour enters the labyrinth of European diplomacy and, playing upon Anglo-French jealousies, entices the French emperor to enter the lists against Austria, and Palmerston and Russell to play diplomacy in Italy's favor, Mr. Thayer is at his best. In the varied and involved phases of the solution of the Italian Question he never loses sight of, as Cavour never forgot, the exigencies of the general European situation. His account of Cavour's adroit but dignified conduct at the Congress of Paris is one of the many strong chapters of the work, and he leads up to

Cavour's great speech with masterly effect—but he is in error in describing the reception of Victor Emmanuel at Paris in the preceding November as "enthusiastic", though he judges accurately Napoleon III.'s policy at the time. His account of the campaign of 1859 is spirited and of unflagging interest, and his study of the diplomatic struggle which preceded is an exceptional piece of close criticism, of the first importance for students of European foreign policy. He lays bare English self-interest in several of the pro-Italian diplomatic efforts of Russell and Palmerston, but he is wrong in ascribing to them disinterestedness "in a high sense" (II. 128)—instead of jealousy of France—in 1859.

The portrait of Napoleon III. is one of the best drawn in the work, although the features are somewhat brutalized. Yet Mr. Thayer is fair in justifying Napoleon III.'s reasons for the peace of Villafranca and in not approving Cavour's conduct at this crisis. Mr. Thayer shows little respect for crowned heads. Queen Victoria has an "unsubtle, commonplace nature" (I. 364), and the Emperor Francis Joseph is complimented upon having "escaped the blight of imbecility" (II. 95). The chapters on contemporary conditions in the Italian states, aside from Piedmont, are the less satisfactory portions of the biography, being based largely upon secondary authorities, some of which, such as Hippolyte Castille and Charles La Varenne, are distinctly questionable. He treats Mazzini with generally deserved severity, but one wishes that he might have inserted a sketch of Mazzini's earlier services to Italy, for which space might more properly have been found than for the dissertation on the medieval papacy (I. 278 ff.). But Mr. Thayer seems imbued with apostolic zeal to smite the "magnificent impudence" of the papacy at every turn, and his constant, unmeasured raillery in this regard is a defect. He criticizes Garibaldi in unnecessarily harsh terms, but usually with full justice. Unpublished documents in the state archives of Italy will show that Brofferio, champion of Piedmontese democracy, whom Mr. Thayer describes as having "deserved the respect even of his antagonists" (I. 93), was at one time in secret relations with Austria. Other hidden documents will prove that what Mr. Thayer describes as "popular belief" was indeed a fact—namely that "the confessional was one of the channels through which the police got information" (I. 186). Much remains yet to be revealed relative to Risorgimento history, but this biography of Cavour, the best work on modern Italy published in English, must long continue an indispensable source.

H. NELSON GAY.

*The History of the British Post Office.* By J. C. HEMMEON, Ph.D. [Harvard Economic Studies, vol. VII.] (Cambridge: Harvard University. 1912. Pp. xi, 261.)

THE arrangement of Mr. Hemmeon's book, which is a study in economic history, is partly chronological, partly topical. The first four chapters trace the development of the British Post-Office from the be-